

HOW TO ORGANIZE ROUND TABLES

For
MOTHERS'
ASSOCIATIONS

By
MRS. ELLEN R. JACKMAN



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CHICAGO NEW YORK

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

HOW TO ORGANIZE ROUND TABLES

For Mothers' Associations

WITH

OUTLINES FOR CHILD-STUDY

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY COL. F. W. PARKER

BY

MRS. ELLEN R. JACKMAN



5-587-5-3

CHICAGO NEW YORK
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PREFACE.

The following outlines are offered in the hope that they may be useful to mothers who are attempting to study their children in the light of recent investigations along the line of Child-Study.

Much of the highest value that has been written within the last few years is so fragmentary and scattered that it does not fall into the hands of those who would be most benefited by it. The plan of work as proposed by the members of the Normal Park Round Table for child study for the ensuing year is to assign to each of three ladies a topic for study and research, the results of which are to be presented at the regular monthly afternoon meeting in a brief paper; the paper is to be followed by a general discussion, each of the members having read or observed along the same lines. Considerable care has been taken to make the literary references following the subjects bear directly upon them, and, while they cover quite a large range of

books and pamphlets, the aim has been to make it possible for any member of a mothers' association to prepare on almost any subject by having access to a few books; hence the same books and chapters have been referred to several times.

If an association can have the publications from the beginning of the "Illinois Society for Child-Study," "The Child-Study Monthly," and can have access to the "Pedagogical Seminary," edited by Dr. G. Stanley Hall, it can carry forward a most profitable work during a year.

Many of the other books referred to can be found in any good public library.

ELLEN R. JACKMAN,

Pres. Normal Park Round Table for Child Study.

CHICAGO, OCT. 4, 1896.

INTRODUCTION.

Never in the history of the world has there been so much discussion upon educational matters as at present. Chairs and departments of pedagogy have been founded in universities and colleges; new normal schools have arisen; summer schools for methods abound; teachers' meetings are full of earnest and honest debate on the principles and methods of education; but, to my mind, the most significant mark of progress in education is found in the fact that parents and citizens are becoming more and more interested in the study of the nature, growth and possibilities of children. In this exceedingly profitable work, they are getting close to the vital interests of society.

The kindergarten, Froebel's divine message, has been received in America, and thousands of little children are enjoying its inestimable benefits. Mothers' classes for the study of the principles and methods of the kindergarten have been formed in intelligent centers. This movement for close and careful investigation of child nature is the true core of all educational progress,

for, mothers either as helps or hindrances, have the most to do with the physical, mental and moral growth of their offspring, not only in the home, but in the school as well.

Education is an open question, a question in whose answer lie boundless possibilities for good and growth. Mankind has but slightly touched these possibilities. Tradition with its rich burden of good, interwoven with illogical conclusions, race, national, sectarian and society prejudices and customs, in the main obstructs onward movements by fixing opinions and hemming thought. Teachers may be fully aroused to a sense of their exalted duties, but they must always and always reckon with the mothers, and if the mothers are victims of fixed ideas, then the more potent influence of home will seriously hinder the advancing work of the school. If both mothers and teachers are buried in traditional methods, then there is no light and no hope. *Home and school joined in one reasonable and thoughtful purpose*, would mean genuine growth and steady progress. And this can only be when the school and the home are one in purpose.

An encouraging phase of educational progress is Child-Study, springing originally from rational psychology, going over to physiological psychology, and resulting in a close and careful investi-

gation of the child, with all the mutual interdependencies and relations of mind, body and soul.

Scientists in laboratories throughout the world are making careful investigations into the nature of the human body and its relations to mind action. America owes Dr. G. Stanley Hall an unbounded debt of gratitude for introducing and fostering child study upon our continent. Teachers and mothers have paused in their work of training and education, and are asking the solemn questions : What is this being whom I am trying to educate and train ? What am I doing wrong ? What can I do better ? What should I put into the life of my child through teaching and training ?

The Illinois Society has organized all round work for Child-Study. It has a corps of scientists engaged in laboratory work; it has interested an increasing number of teachers in the study of children in the school; and, best of all, has established Child-Study round tables for parents. It proposes to continue this work more and more systematically. The society has now something like fifteen hundred members, and fifteen round tables in the state of Illinois. Mrs. Wilbur S. Jackman is the president of one of the most effective round tables in the state. She has taken great pains to arouse an interest in the study of children by mothers, and is well prepared to pre-

sent to mothers, in her outlines, the best methods of Child-Study.

Surely no one can deny that mothers should know more and more of their children. Thousands of children suffer from disease, from mental and moral constrictions, on account of the ignorance of their parents. That which may be easily overcome in the early stages of the child's life, once chronic, becomes a weakness in character and an obstruction to personal development. That the mother should know about the nutrition of her children is beyond question; but higher than food nutrition stands the nutrition of the brain and of the nervous system.

Society is now full of clubs and associations for charitable purposes. Temperance is a central question; missions are founded; waifs are fed and clothed; in every direction women are exercising wholesome influence upon human progress. The foundation of it all, however, that which will prevent crime, disease, ignorance, and which will close the prisons and hospitals, is the close and careful study of the little child by its parents. The message from Bethlehem must be sounded again over this earth. Every child is divine and the highest mission of man is to see that that divinity is developed into its fullest power.

FRANCIS W. PARKER.

QUOTATIONS.

Child-Study promotes freedom and individuality, is adapted to bring out the woman power, form a new bond between the parent and school, and is a method in which all can co-operate. The glory of the child is unity with itself and external nature. The glory of the teacher is unity with nature and the child.

Child-Study is the great sociological or humanitarian study.—*Dr. G. Stanley Hall.*

A correct comprehension of external, material things is a preliminary to a just comprehension of intellectual relations.

Parents, take your little children by the hand; go with them into nature as into the house of God. Allow the wee one to stroke the good cow's forehead and run about among the fowl and play at the edge of the wood. Make companions for your boys and girls of the trees and the banks and the pasture land. Help them to a knowledge of all that is sound and strong and beautiful.—*Froebel.*

The commonest and deadliest foe to excellence is the habit of dull conformity to the average life around us, sinking contentedly into a set of mechanical usages or a torpid routine.—*W. R. Alger, "The School of Life."*

Modern methods of governing children aim to be in harmony with natural law. When they are so, they are beneficial, pleasurable; when not so, painful.

The child's mind unfolds like a plant in natural order. Do not interfere with this method, but carefully promote it. Do not expect the fruit before the flower has unfolded. Do not expect the flower before the tender leaf and stalk have grown.—*Bertha Meyer*

Let the history of your domestic rule typify, in little, the history of our political rule; at the outset autocratic control, where control is really needful; by and by incipient constitutionalism in which the liberty of the subject gains some express recognition; successive extensions of this liberty of the subject gradually ending in parental abdication.—*Herbert Spencer*.

Absolute obedience at birth gradually growing towards self-emancipation.

In interpreting children we can never rise above our own real or possible experiences. A man who has never done a mean thing is not able to sympathize with a boy who has done a mean thing.—*Earl Barnes*.

We hold up before our children the faults which we bid them avoid, rather than the virtues and harmonies they are to imitate.—“*Conscious Motherhood*.”

The sweetest sight in all the world is a little child happy at its play.—*Francis W. Parker*.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS.

The dependence of health and vigor of mind upon health and vigor of body is now the fundamental proposition in every rational scheme of education.—*Chas. Eliot Norton.*

I. CLOTHING OF CHILDREN.

Infants' dress.—The "Gertrude" costume.
Difference in Dress of Boys and Girls.—

Material, shoes, skirts, long wraps,
uneven exposure of body, head covering,
night dress.

II. CARE OF THE BODY.

Bathing—hot and cold.

Care of—1. Ears.

2. Eyes.

3. Teeth.

4. Nails.

5. Skin.

6. Hair.

Simple tests for defects.

Carriage of the body—Head.

Feet.

Chest.

Abdomen.

- III. FOOD—1. Character.
2. Preparation.
3. Quantity.
4. Frequency.
5. Importance of breakfast.
6. Likes and dislikes. How treated?
7. School lunches
- IV. SLEEP—1. Natural.
2. Amount.
3. Hours.
4. Disturbances, cause?
5. Relation to food.
6. Relation to work.
7. Relation to play.
- V. EXERCISE—Boys.
Girls.
How, where, when?
- Fatigue:* The physical and mental effects
and the danger of continuing long
in any direction.
- Home Employments:* Their nature and value.
- VI. BAD HABITS—Cause? Cure?
1. Stammering.
 2. Biting nails.
 3. Sucking fingers.
 4. Swaying body.
 5. Twitching muscles of face.
 6. Mouth breathing.

VII. PERIODS OF GROWTH.

1. The relative growth of boys and girls.
2. The period of adolescence in boys and girls.
3. The growth and maturity of different organs and parts of the body at different ages in a child's life and the importance of the facts in determining the training and education of children.

VIII. DISEASES OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

1. Catarrhal affections.
2. Nervousness.
3. Headache.
4. Of skin.

IX. HOME AND SCHOOL HYGIENE.

1. Site.
2. Drainage.
3. Sewerage.
4. Light.
5. Neighborhood.
6. Outbuildings.
7. Closets.
8. Plumbing.
9. Safety.
10. Ventilation and heating.

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INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL CONDITIONS.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS.—“ A child's first right is to
be well born.”

1. Duty of parent to child.
2. Duty of child to parent.

How far shall lives of parents be subordinated
to lives of children ?

Danger of American hurry and worry. Artificial
standards of living.

Childhood's right to—

1. Justice; (*a*) discipline; (*b*) instruction.
2. Happiness.
3. Contact with natural surroundings.

Questions—1. At what age does the child first
begin to claim things as his
own ?

2. Do boys or girls most readily surrender their rights ?
3. Is not the path towards self-government along the line of the child's conception of justice ?

4. Shall the child's will be developed by opposing desire or by training in power of choice ?

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CHILDREN'S INTERESTS.

Indicated by—

1. Collections.
2. Plays and games.
3. Choice of literature.
4. Imitation.

Observations made—

1. At home.
2. At school.
3. At play.
4. In the street.
5. At work.
6. In conversation with one another.

NOTE.—A child's strongest interest lies on top and presses most for expression. He acquires his language power along the lines of his interests.—*Earl Barnes.*

How objects most appeal to children at different ages through :

1. Use.
2. Form.
3. Color.
4. Structure.
5. Substance.

Interest in the abstract increases from six to sixteen.

1. Are there marked interests or tendencies common to all children, under normal conditions, at certain ages, indicating a law of development ?
2. If so, to what extent shall children's natural interests be our guide in education ?
3. Compare the relative value of induced interests and natural interests.

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PLAYS AND GAMES.

“In childish play deep meaning lies.”

Expression of Activity—

1. Bodily. Experimental. A study of environment.
2. Mental. Fancy. The social life. The dramatic instinct.

Plays with—1. Playthings—number, value of sand, clay, dolls, marbles, etc.

2. Children—

(a) When, where, to what extent?

(b) Beginning of social relationship. Exercise of governing power, gentleness, generosity, forgiveness, self-control.

The early games should assist the mental development, for the physical advances gigantically without help; later ones should draw the physical up along with the mental which, by schools and advancing years, takes the precedence.—*Jean Paul Richter.*

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CHILDREN'S FEARS.

1. Inherited.
2. Acquired.

Nature of Fear—

1. Natural phenomena : death, storm, accident.
2. The supernatural: ghosts, giants, monsters.
3. The undefined: terror in the dark, shapes, etc.

Causes of Fear—

1. Ignorance.
2. Helplessness.

Cure—Turn on the search-light of exact information and objective fact and exorcise the demon with the modern spirit of natural science and manual training.—*Agnes Sinclair Holbrook.*

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PROBLEM OF DISCIPLINE— PUNISHMENT.

The Three Stages in History of Race—(See
“Studies in Education,” No. II., Earl Barnes).

Punishment for purposes of—

1. Revenge. “An eye for an eye,
a tooth for a tooth.”
2. Prevention. To frighten evil
doers. Fear.
3. Remedy. Cure. Cause in ignor-
ance or disease.

Recognition of the fact that difficulties of
moral training result from *combined* faults of
parents and children.

Causes of Bad Conduct—

1. Physical discomfort.
2. Sense of injustice.
3. Ignorance of result of conduct.
4. Lack of self-control.
5. Carelessness.
6. Inherent desire to do wrong

Result of Bad Conduct—

1. Temporary annoyance to others.
2. Effect upon child's character.
Formation of bad habits.

Question—To what extent shall the parent permit the child to feel the natural consequences of his own conduct?

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RHYTHM.

Those who are acquainted with the work of Miss Annie E. Allen of the Kindergarten Department of the Chicago Normal School are familiar with her manner of training and success in developing a conception of rhythm in the children. The beneficent effect of this training upon those little children who from mistakes in home education or other cause are afflicted with self-consciousness, cannot be doubted. The following suggestive words by her may be helpful:

“Who that has watched the movements of an unconscious infant has not been impressed by his steady growth towards rhythmic grace? All will acknowledge after the experience of watching this gradual growth that his first disjointed jerking of arms and legs is but the embryonic expression of his future free, physical movements.

“Most of this beauty and grace is lost; and how? So long as the little child remains unconscious of himself and has perfect freedom of action, unhampered by clothing or constant

admonitions from the one who watches over him; is unembarassed by the opinions of those around him, his innermost personality shows itself to an admiring world. When he is old enough to have control of his body under such circumstances, his voice rings *true*, his step is light, his gestures natural and beautiful (always provided his environment is good, as he imitates often to the destruction of his natural expression).

"To preserve this simplicity and unconsciousness and its accompanying charm of movement is a serious problem, but one that merits much thought and study of the nature of children from a physiological and psychological standpoint.

"The image, strongly impressed upon the child, of the thought or interest of this movement withdraws his attention from the *how* he is doing it and steadily directs it to the object of such expression. For instance, let him watch the movements of a horse in harness, in his stall, on the street, when a band is playing, etc. Ask him to represent the different movements. Criticise his representation (not him); take him again to see the horse and let him unravel for himself the truest way of expressing the different conditions.

“ If these conditions were well expressed, at the same time at the piano with music, suggestive of the different movements, it would greatly aid the children in expressing themselves freely. The co-ordination of every muscle of the body, resulting in harmony of movement, seems to react upon the child psychologically and free him from himself.

“ Certain rhythms adapted to certain movements classify different rhythms, and this classification at once opens the way for the appreciation and recognition of music, and its physical expression is to a little child almost what the patent medicine promises to a sick person, a cure-all, but requiring as an adjunct an intelligent leader in its judicious use.”—*Preface to Clara Louise Anderson's new book of Instrumental Music for Home, School and Kindergarten.*

HOW TO JUDGE A SCHOOL : SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS.

WILBUR S. JACKMAN.

I. THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.

1. Size; do they afford ample room for play for all the pupils ? Do the children have to play in the street ?
2. Do the teachers, pupils, or school authorities make any attempt to have the grounds made attractive in appearance ?
3. On which side of the house is the play ground ? Are the grounds in sunshine or shade ?
4. Are the grounds devoted in any way to the purposes of instruction, *i.e.*, through beds of flowers or other plants ?
5. Are there shade trees ?
6. Consider the relative value of cinders and grass for a school yard.

II. THE SCHOOLHOUSE ; *from without.*

1. Does it present an inviting appearance ?
2. Are the colors and trimmings in good taste ?
3. Is there any attempt at architectural beauty ?
4. Is it far enough from all other buildings to insure good light ?

5. Is it far enough from public streets or railroads to be free from irritating noises ?

6. Are the surroundings healthful, free from malarial and other unhealthful influences ?

7. Is it properly provided with fire escapes ?

III. THE SCHOOLHOUSE; *from within.*

1. Are the children taught in damp or poorly lighted basement rooms ?

2. Does the height of the building require much stair climbing ? Is the "rise" of the stairs easy for children ?

3. How are the corridors lighted ? Is the light sufficient ? Are there dark corners ? Are they wide enough to admit of easy passage for all the pupils ?

4. Are the interior colors restful and pleasing to the eye ? Are they adapted to the amount of light that is afforded ?

5. Examine the wardrobes; is there a hook for the wraps of each pupil ?

6. Is the wardrobe warmed and properly ventilated ?

7. Look into it on a wet day, while filled with damp wraps, umbrellas, overshoes, etc. Will the children be compelled to put on damp cloaks and coats at the close of school ? If so, do not charge colds, sore throat, toothache, earache, pneumonia, chills and fever to Providence.

8. Where are the closets ? Are they properly flushed and ventilated ?

9. Are there basins where the pupils may wash themselves ?

10. How are towels supplied ? Do different pupils use the same towel ?

11. Ask for the regulations concerning the use of the washrooms and closets by the pupils.

12. What is the source of the drinking water ? Is it filtered ?

13. What kind of drinking cups are used ? Are they kept clean ?

14. Is the building well janitored ? Note the ventilation; is it by means of windows and doors ? Is there a "fan blast ?" Is there dust on the railings and in the corners ?

15. How often is the building scrubbed ? Are there door mats ?

IV. THE SCHOOLROOM.

1. Is its general appearance attractive and inviting, or the reverse ?

2. Note the colors; are there curtains ? Note the effect of the wall colors; are there inside blinds ? Do they work easily ?

3. What is the most offensive feature ? Could it be easily removed ?

4. Is the room clean ? Examine the windows, the corners, the pictures and shelves.

5. How does the light fall upon the children? Upon the teacher? It should be from the side.

6. Are there dark corners in the room?

7. Are the desks of proper height? Are the seats comfortable? If not, *put yourself in the pupil's place for an hour.*

8. Are the desks marred or unsightly?

9. Is the blackboard easily visible from all parts of the room? Is it shiny or otherwise trying on the eyes?

10. Is the blackboard of proper height for the pupils?

11. Does the mode of heating the room insure equable temperature in all parts?

12. Does the mode of heating and ventilating cause draughts which strike the pupils?

V. THE TEACHER.

1. Is his appearance in the main prepossessing or the contrary?

2. Note the personal virtues—the good taste and cleanliness in dress; the collar, tie; cuffs; the arrangement of the hair; the finger nails; the condition of the shoes.

3. Does he look after the physical welfare of the pupils; the ventilation and heating of room; attention to draughts; arrangement of curtains to secure best light.

4. If the children are small, does he attend properly to the wraps at dismissal?

5. Is the teacher a good housekeeper, *i.e.*, are the materials used in the regular work arranged in an orderly and economical, or in a slovenly way?

6. Note the arrangement of the books upon the teacher's desk; also the materials in cases or closets about the room. *Remember that these appearances very often out-teach the teacher.*

7. Is the teacher nervous and irritable or well poised?

8. Is the teacher's poise the repose of self-command, the frigidity of an iceberg, or the torpor of stupidity?

VI. THE TEACHING.

1. Is the general effect of the teacher's work to throw responsibility upon the pupils or to relieve them from it? THIS IS THE SUPREME TEST. If it is the latter, move heaven and earth, if necessary, to get a new teacher, or else take your children from school.

2. Are the pupils made responsible for the care and order of the room? the desks? the blackboard? the shelves? the floor? the pictures? the work materials? the books?

3. Do the pupils question and answer with freedom or constraint?

4. Do the pupils all seem to get equally fair attention from the teacher?

5. Does the teacher seem to use the same mode of approach to all the different pupils? Note the manner with the rowdy, the dolt, the precocious.

6. Is freedom of expression encouraged?

7. Is varied expression encouraged, *i.e.*, through drawing, painting, blackboard work, writing and modeling?

8. Are the pupils given opportunities to *do* things and encouraged to try? Is the teaching directed chiefly to the learning of words?

9. Is the teacher sufficiently critical of the things said and done by the pupils to insure in them a cultivation of correctness, accuracy and good taste?

10. Is a knowledge of the subject-matter considered by teacher and pupils in any way *immediately* essential to the latter?

11. Do you find the subject-matter taught in the schoolroom bearing directly and immediately upon the pupil's own life?

12. Carefully compare the material in which the teacher seeks to have him interested in school with the subjects of his most lively interests when the pupil is at home or elsewhere out of school; is the material out of school related to that used in school?

13. What opportunity does the pupil have for unrestrained enjoyment of nature—such as you can recall from your own early experience?

14. Can you see specific ways in which the teaching tends to make the pupil better acquainted with those physical influences that affect his health and life?

15. Is he being taught enough of nature to enable him to understand, that cleanliness, for example, is essential to health?

16. Is he being given such social privileges as will result in a gradual development of correct notions respecting rights of property?

17. Is the pupil being taught what he ought to do now and how to do it by being brought, immediately, face to face and hand to hand with the things and forces with which he must always deal, or is he being *belabored with words* ABOUT things?

18. Is the pupil's time consumed chiefly in *doing* or in *talking*? In *judging* or in *memorizing*? In *creating* or in *copying*? Is he *freely expressing himself*, or is he being "*kept in order*"?

VII. THE PUPILS.

1. Are the pupils neat and clean in person and clothes?

2. Is their personal attitude towards the teacher free or restrained?

3. Do the pupils respond promptly and pleasantly to the call of the duties imposed upon them?

4. Do the children seem to feel that their work is an outgrowth of self-need or that it is something imposed upon them from outside sources?

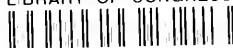
5. Are they interested the more in their work or in their teacher?

6. Can you measure the pupil's progress in school by his conduct in the home?

7. When you talk to him at home, does his mind seem to be stored with actual pictures of the things studied in school, or is he befogged with words?

8. Does his school work seem to be clearing up his ideas of his own personal relations?

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